

May 1, 1975

boards allowed the control of the schools to get away from them. School boards became wimpering, senile servants of a minority of persons who had a lot of influence. Thereby the school board lost its dignity. I think that when you elect these people, and the responsibility is easily pinpointed. It's easily pinpointed that you'll find a more active, a more effective, a more cohesive group of persons. I think it would serve to the benefit of the school system. To say that the school boards should not be active in policy development is to say that we should not be active in representing those people who elect us. I would hope that you would adopt the Simpson amendment and advance Senator Chambers bill to E & R.

PRESIDENT: Senator Simpson, do you have something for the body?

SENATOR SIMPSON: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I'm attempting to put this on Senator Chambers bill. There is a limited amount of people here today. I have a fear in looking around that the ones that are speaking against it that they may not want to move Senator Chambers bill with this amendment on. With that, I would ask first all unanimous consent to withdraw the amendment. I would ask that I might print it in the Journal. I would retry it on Select File on another day.

PRESIDENT: Is there an objection? I think he can withdraw his amendment if he wants to. You'll be recognized next Senator Koch. Senator Simpson is withdrawing his amendment. No, he doesn't need it. He just made it, he can withdraw it. Chair recognizes Senator Koch.

SENATOR KOCH: I apologize for Senator Simpson. He asked for unanimous consent. Mr. President, members of the body, we have been through this issue since 1969. It was LB 1 then. It has been before this body every year since that time. How often do we have to go over what I think is a piece of trivia? Let me give you a little history in the business of school boards that I would hope that you would listen to. I'm going to quote directly from history. In the 1880's we were electing boards by wards across the nation, including Omaha. In the early 1900's we were doing the same thing. Then, finally if you remember your history, of the United States, there was a tremendous reform effort that took place. This was the era of the muckrackers and the consequent rise of progressive government. The effort was to clean up government in its totality, to get rid of the many partisan scandals which prevailed it. Schools were particularly caught up in this movement. In big cities school boards were elected by wards based upon political machines. The result was a very uneven delivery of school services. No one could be sure whether children were being taught in a professional way by professionals, or whether the politicians and the ward healers had control of the system. In Omaha they went through the business of school boards by districts until late 1800's. The voters